

**Status Report: Remaining Three High Priority
Areas for Programmatic Approach**

Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Committee

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Why are we here today?

In April, 2002, TPEAC approved the programmatic subcommittee report which identified 9 high priority WSDOT activities that should be considered for multi-agency programmatic coverage.

All but three of these areas will be covered by work nearly completed (*Over Water Bridge and Ferry Terminal Maintenance and Preservation Activities*) or about to get underway (*Drainage Maintenance and Repair Work*). These are covered in the other briefing papers.

The TPEAC reauthorization legislation directs that as part of its work plan TPEAC should outline how the work on the nine highest priority areas should be completed by June 30, 2004 (See attached work plan).

This briefing paper generally describes the proposed subject matter and coverage of the programmatic approach to the remaining three areas.

Where will we go from here?

The remaining three activities are expected to be covered by two programmatic agreements. One agreement will cover bridge scour repair and streambank stabilization and the other will cover bridge removal.

What will be the expected coverage of the new agreement and how will it work?

Development of these remaining agreements will be the most challenging of the nine high priority activities. Similar to the Drainage Maintenance programmatic agreement, these activities also require permit approval by local, state, and federal level agencies. Additionally, these activities have more complex issues surrounding them that will make it challenging to develop multi-agency standard conditions that would lead to programmatic permit approval. Some of these issues include:

- Programmatic permits are mostly suitable for routine activities: The three remaining activities are less routine in terms of design and construction than the previous activities. For example, bridge scour and bank stabilization projects are designed around factors that are very site specific (e.g. stream size, velocity, and type of erosion). Bridge removal is also designed around site specific factors

including size and type of bridge as well as cost considerations. The challenging issue will be developing standard conditions that address complex variables associated with these activities.

- Differing agency perspectives regarding design and impact: Programmatic permits are mostly suitable for low impacting activities where impacts can be mitigated through standard conditions that minimize and avoid all impacts. The five or six different agencies that issue permits for these activities have largely differing opinions regarding the impacts and need for mitigation for these activities. For example, some permit agencies do not allow or recommend standard engineering methods for designing bridge scour or bank stabilization projects. One example is the case of WSDOT's Anthracite Creek scour project, where King County has indicated they do not allow the use of angular rock rip rap in project design. This is one of several projects that exemplify the current way of doing business which results in shuttle negotiating different standards requested by permit agencies into project design which, results in additional time and cost added to project delivery.

In light of these challenging issues, a significant benefit from this process could be gained where all jurisdictional agencies buy in to programmatic agreement on methods of design, construction, impact assessment and mitigation. In the case of bridge scour and bank stabilization, groundwork has already been laid with respect to the latest Integrated Streambank Protection Guidelines. These guidelines are agreed upon between WSDOT, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ecology and the Corps and establish a common method for repair selection and project design. Taken a step further, we might also be able to get programmatic permit approval with low thresholds that cover a small percentage of these activities (e.g. Scour repair where only "x" amount of rock used for the repair or bridge removal happens where no material enters the water body).

As with the Drainage Maintenance programmatic effort, one important consideration toward the success of programmatic approval for the three activities is the ability to get buy-in from local and federal agencies on the programmatic agreement for these activities. Both levels of agencies currently play a significant role with respect to streamlining permits for these activities.

Next steps?

The programmatic subcommittee will report to TPEAC in July with updated information on the status of this approach. The programmatic implementing group is scheduled to begin working on these activities in September, 2003.

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